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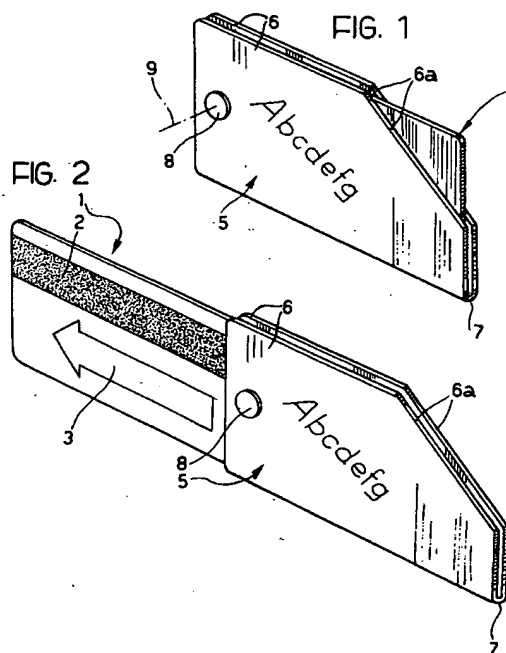
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I-10121 Torino(IT)**(54) **A magnetic card with a protective cover.**

(57) A magnetic card which can be used as a key for operating automatic doors or gates or for actuating electronic recognition or presence-detection devices in general has a protective cover (5) having two substantially rigid main portions (6) which are joined along one side and are adapted to cover the two faces of the card (1) at least partially. The cover (5) is articulated to the card about an axis (9) perpendicular to the plane of the card and adjacent one end thereof, so that the card can adopt any position between a position in which it is retracted into the cover and a fully extended position in which the card (1) substantially forms an extension of the cover (5).

**EP 0 515 327 A1**

The subject of the present invention is a magnetic card which can be used, in particular, as a key for operating automatic doors or gates or for actuating electronic recognition or presence-detection devices in general, characterised in that it has a protective cover with two substantially rigid main portions which are joined along at least one side and are adapted to cover the two faces of the card at least partially, the cover being articulated to the card about an axis perpendicular to the plane of the card and adjacent one end thereof, so that the card can adopt any position between a position in which it is retracted into the cover and a fully extended position in which the card substantially forms an extension of the cover.

The characteristics and advantages of the invention will become clear from the description which follows with reference to the appended drawings, provided purely by way of non-limiting example, in which:

Figures 1 and 2 are perspective views showing the card according to the invention in its fully retracted position in the cover and in its fully extended position, respectively, and

Figure 3 shows the use of the card according to the invention.

With reference to the drawings, a magnetic card of known type usable, in particular, as a key for operating automatic doors or gates or for actuating electronic recognition or presence-detection devices in general is indicated 1. The structure of the magnetic card is not shown in detail since, as already indicated, it is of known type and does not fall within the scope of the invention. Briefly, the card 1 comprises a rectangular body of plastics material on one face of which a strip 2 of magnetic material is deposited. As is well known, both faces of the magnetic card may bear alphanumeric information or graphic symbols such as, for example, the arrow indicated 3 in Figure 2 which is intended to indicate to the user the direction in which the card should be inserted in the slot 4 (Figure 3).

The magnetic card 1 has a protective cover 5 constituted by a single sheet of plastics material which is bent so as to be U-shaped and defines two substantially rigid main portions 6 joined together along a major side of the cover, which is also rectangular, by a spine 7. The two portions 6 preferably have cut-away portions 6a at one corner to facilitate the gripping of the card 1 by the user (Figure 1). The material of the cover 5 is such as to protect the card against the risk of demagnetisation.

The cover 5 is articulated to the magnetic card 1 by a plastics pin 8 with an enlarged head about an axis 9 perpendicular to the plane of the card and adjacent one end thereof.

The card can thus adopt any position between

the position shown in Figure 1, in which it is fully retracted into the cover, and the fully extended position shown in Figure 2, in which the card 1 substantially forms an extension of the cover 5. In this condition, the cover 5 thus also performs the useful function of facilitating the insertion of the card 1 by the user into the slot 4 for receiving it in the electronic reading device (Figure 3).

Like the card 1, the cover 5 also bears alphanumeric symbols and inscriptions on its faces, for advertising purposes or for providing information for the user.

The dimensions of the card 1 are preferably slightly smaller than those of a standard magnetic card. In one embodiment, a magnetic card of 73 x 40 mm was formed, the cover measuring 75 x 43 mm. These dimensions were optimal when the card was used as a key for operating automatic doors or gates.

The cover according to the invention also solves the problem of storing and protecting the card securely for the user of a key of this type and, at the same time, ensures that it is readily available at the time of use.

Naturally, the invention also extends to other models which achieve equal utility by means of the same innovative concept.

Claims

1. A magnetic card (1) which can be used, in particular, as a key for operating automatic doors or gates or for actuating electronic recognition or presence-detection devices in general,

characterised in that it has a protective cover (5) having two substantially rigid main portions (6) which are joined along one side and are adapted to cover the two faces of the card (1) at least partially, the cover (5) being articulated to the card (1) about an axis (9) perpendicular to the plane of the card and adjacent one end thereof, so that the card (1) can adopt any position between a position in which it is retracted fully into the cover (5) and a fully extended position in which the card (1) substantially forms an extension of the cover (5).

2. A card according to Claim 1, characterised in that the cover (5) is constituted by a single sheet of plastics material (5) which is bent so as to be U-shaped.

3. A card according to Claim 1, characterised in that the two portions (6) of the cover (5) have cut-away portions (6a) at one corner of the cover for facilitating the gripping of the card (1).

4. A card according to Claim 1, characterised in that it has smaller dimensions than a standard magnetic card.

5. A card according to Claim 1, characterised in that the cover is made of a material suitable for protecting the card against the risk of demagnetisation.

The whole substantially as described and illustrated and for the purposes specified.

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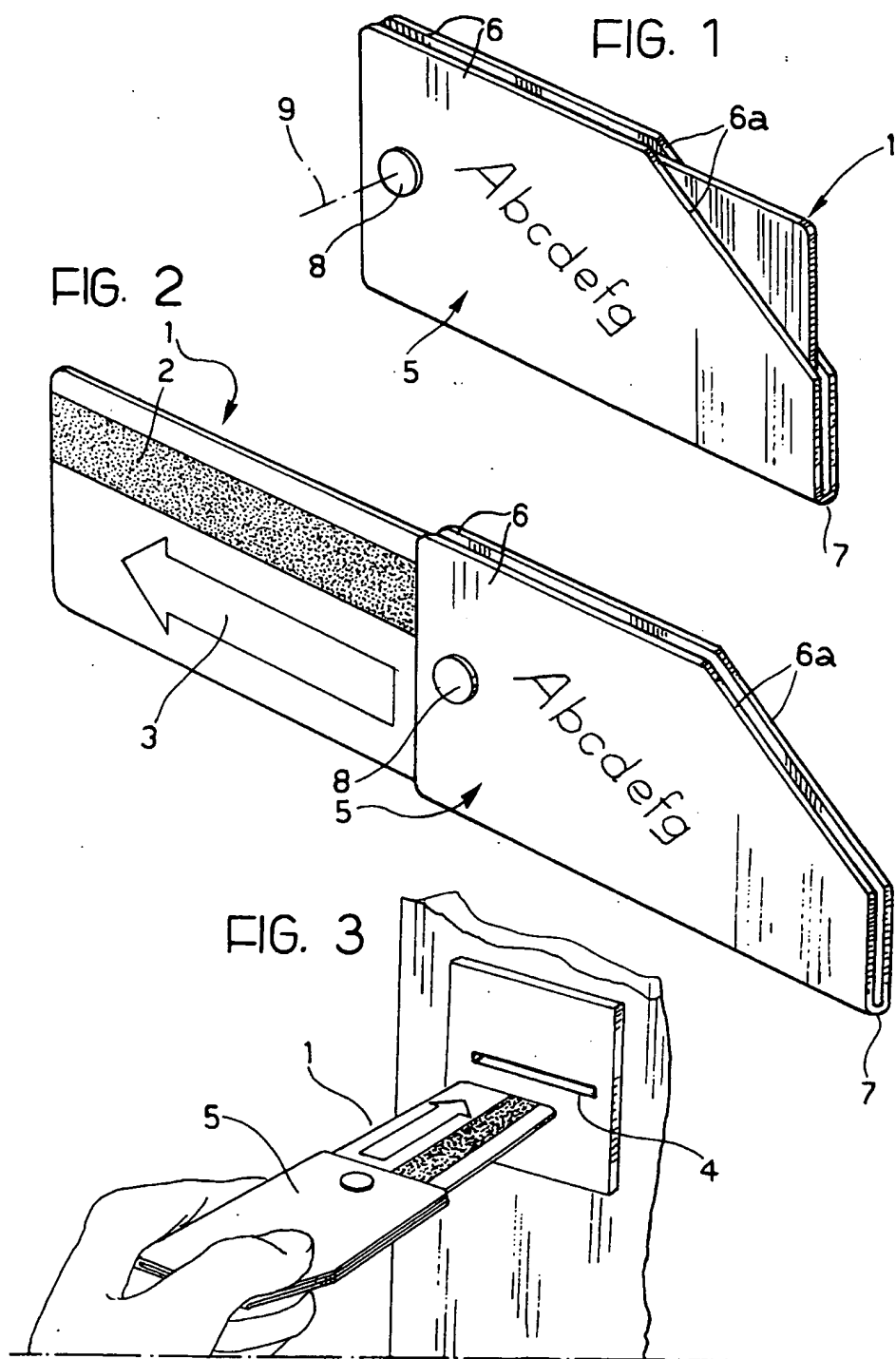
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 92 83 0237

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
Y	US-A-1 666 006 (DUNCAN) * the whole document *	1	A45C11/18
Y	EP-A-0 379 921 (NAVA MILANO) * the whole document *	1	
A	---	3	
A	US-A-1 682 259 (WILDEN) * the whole document *	2	
A	---	5	
A	US-A-4 632 250 (UEDA) * the whole document *		
A	---		
A	US-A-3 242 959 (GLASS) ---		
A	DE-A-2 335 001 (AKO) ---		TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
A	DE-B-1 108 107 (PLATKE) -----		
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			A45C E05B
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 08 SEPTEMBER 1992	Examiner SIGMALT C.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons @ : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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